

TESTIMONY TO THE LITTLE HOOVER COMMISSION
Secretary for Education Kerry Mazzoni
February 21, 2001

The Commission has asked me to address the issue of attracting and retaining high quality teachers for California schools. Specifically, I want to address the following five areas:

- New Initiatives
- Teacher Training and Credentialing
- Strategies for encouraging more trained teachers to teach
- Improving the quality of school management
- Assessing teacher workforce quality

Governor Davis and the Legislature have embarked upon the most ambitious teacher recruitment program ever. At the same time, we are taking extraordinary steps to ensure that all new teachers are fully qualified and that adequate numbers are committed to teaching in the low performing schools where they are needed most.

Initiatives established in 2000 include:

- Teaching as a Priority Block Grants -- \$118.6 million for school districts to provide incentives to attract credentialed teachers to be employed and retained in low-performing schools.
- The Teacher Recruitment Incentive Program has awarded grants to establish six regional teacher recruitment centers in areas of the state with the highest need. These centers serve Los Angeles, San Diego, the Inland Empire, Central Valley and Northern California.
They are designed to ease the process of applying to districts for teaching jobs, make incentives known and available to teacher candidates and steer qualified candidates to low-performing schools. Schools with inefficient personnel systems will be given technical support from the Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team to improve their hiring processes.
- A \$9.4 million advertising campaign, both at the neighborhood and statewide level, will work with the regional recruitment centers both to spread the message that California needs and values teachers, and send teaching candidates directly to schools with vacancies.
- The Governor's Teaching Fellowships program provides merit-based grants of \$20,000 to 1,000 graduate students who, upon becoming credentialed teachers, agree to teach or provide administration in low-performing schools for four years. This program provides an incentive for the best teacher candidates to

stay in school until completing the credential process, and to then serve in the schools where they are needed most.

- The Certificated Staff Performance Incentive, funded at \$100 million, provides bonuses from \$5,000 to \$25,000 to teachers at low-performing schools showing extraordinary improvement in student achievement.
- The Extra Credit Teacher Home Purchase Program provides mortgage credit certificates and loans funded by mortgage revenue bonds to fully credentialed and otherwise eligible teachers, principals and assistant principals who agree to teach or provide administration in low-performing schools for four years.
- Beginning teacher salaries have been increased from an average of \$28,000 when Governor Davis took office to \$34,000 last year.
- A tax credit of up to \$1,500 for teachers sends the message that California taxpayers value the profession.
- Bonuses of \$10,000 will be provided for every teacher who obtains certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, and an additional \$20,000 will be given to board-certified teachers who agree to teach in a low-performing school for four years.
- Retirement benefits for teachers were enhanced by allowing 25 percent of STRS contributions (2% of earnings) to be placed in a supplemental retirement account available as an annuity or lump sum upon retirement with no reduction in benefits. For a teacher earning \$45,000 per year, over 10 years this account will mean an additional benefit of some \$16,000. Additionally, the cap has been lifted on the post-retirement income of teachers who return to the classroom.
- The Assumption Program of Loans for Education (APLE) Program has been expanded to provide education loan forgiveness awards of up to \$11,000 to 6,500 teachers. The Cal Grant T program, funded at \$10 million, provides awards for tuition and fees for 3,000 teachers in credentialing programs for one full-time academic year. Recipients must teach for one year at a low-performing school for each \$2,000 awarded for a maximum of four years.
- The Pre-Internship Teaching Program, authorizing the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to issue a pre-intern teaching certificate instead of an emergency multiple-subjects permit to a school district employee who meets the minimum requirements set by the CTC. This program provides grants of \$2,000 for a pre-intern teacher who passes the subject matter exam and enrolls in an approved teaching credential program. It is an alternative path to teaching that helps decrease the number of emergency permit teachers in our classrooms. The state now also pays \$2,500 per teacher intern, to pay for additional classroom support, including teacher supervision and help with lesson plans as part of training toward a teaching credential. These programs allow 12,700

teacher trainees to work as paid classroom teachers under mentor supervision while earning their credentials.

The Governor's proposed budget for the 2001-02 fiscal year includes:

- A 30-day extension of the instructional year for middle school teachers, amounting to a 17% increase in pay for teachers at participating schools. The Governor proposes fully funding extension of three middle school grades within three years.
- Paid, intensive professional development for all teachers of math and reading on academic content standards and on the use of newly adopted standards-based instructional materials.
- Professional development for all school principals and vice-principals in school management and the use of standards to improve instruction and student performance. Providing good site leadership will improve working conditions and support for teachers at the school site level.
- Incentive funding of \$30 million for increased enrollment in algebra that may be used for teacher bonuses or increased pay.
- A loaned teacher tax credit for employers who lend employees to public schools to teach math and science.

TEACHER TRAINING AND CREDENTIALING

The commission asks when California will have enough fully qualified teachers. California needs to recruit an estimated 300,000 teachers over the next ten years. We are hopeful that the multiple programs and incentives the state has provided will begin to rapidly increase the number of people entering the teaching profession.

To help us attract teachers from other states, the Commission on Teacher Credentialing will continue work on identifying states with credential requirements that are equivalent to California standards, and on determining ways of speeding the process of obtaining California credentials for teachers from states with different requirements.

The Office of the Secretary for Education is also studying the feasibility of expanding and enhancing programs to move students more quickly into teaching by allowing them to begin studying necessary subjects as early as high school. We are working to identify barriers to rapid transition from community college into credentialing programs. And we are reviewing credential requirements for professionals in other areas that want to enter the teaching profession.

STRATEGIES FOR ENCOURAGING MORE TRAINED TEACHERS TO TEACH

State budgets during Governor Davis' first two years in office have provided record levels of funding for schools, enough to provide salary increases of more than 10 percent in most districts and to increase minimum beginning teacher salaries from an average of \$28,000 to \$34,000. The state's first tax credit for teachers also sends a powerful message of support to the teaching profession.

Salary increases alone won't solve the problem, however. The state's effort to recruit and retain teachers is and must continue to be a multifaceted approach. While not every school district faces a recruitment crisis, different regions, as well as different districts within those regions, face varied obstacles to attracting and hiring qualified teachers. At one school district, prospective teachers may balk at high area housing costs. At another, housing might be affordable but salaries not competitive with districts nearby. The power of the state's new teacher recruitment efforts lies in their flexibility and multi-pronged, "menu" approach to addressing a variety of school district needs.

In addition to salary increases and incentive programs, the state has provided mentor support to all first and second-year teachers through the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program, and to veteran teachers through locally negotiated Peer Assistance and Review programs.

In the future we want to continue the work started with the Governor's extended middle school year proposal to move teachers closer to a full, 12-month professional year. Teachers deserve to work a full year, and moving them onto a professional schedule would provide them with salaries that are more attractive and competitive with other professional fields.

We would also seek to change the culture of teaching to make the profession more rewarding on an individual basis. Teachers need to have opportunities for advancement and career tracks for those who would like to remain in the classroom and those who prefer to move into the school administration. Similarly, tying financial and other incentives to increased training and structured professional development changes the culture around teaching to one that rewards individual effort and commitment, as is done in other professions. We need to work on breaking down barriers that have made teaching unattractive to men, such as the long-held perception of teaching as primarily a female profession.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT

This administration recognizes the importance of a good school leader to an effective school. Accordingly, the Governor's initiatives include a proposal to train every school site leader in effective school

management techniques as well as the use of standards-based instruction and assessments to improve student performance.

We are also considering development of an alternative certification program for administrators coming from other professions. Site level and district management require different skills from those necessary to classroom teaching. Given the projected shortage of administrators, we need to look at attracting professionals from other fields to become school site managers. An alternative certification program could capitalize on the management skills acquired in other professions while providing training that is essential for school leadership and management.

ASSESSING TEACHER WORKFORCE QUALITY

It is difficult to assess teacher quality without the ability to monitor individual student performance over time. Accordingly, the Governor's initiatives include incentives for school districts to develop systems for monitoring individual student achievement from class to class and school to school over time. The state's new incentive-based accountability system also focuses school attention on subject areas that need strengthening and identification of practices that promote high student achievement.

Incentives for districts to develop Peer Assistance and Review programs for veteran teachers will also help schools improve and assess teacher quality. Without such programs, teachers, unlike all other professionals, operate with little supervision and feedback on their performance.